Panel 1B: Injustice and Undue Influence in the Food Industry

Dave Simon
Lauren Ornelas

Start Date
13-9-2014 9:45 AM
End Date
13-9-2014 10:45 AM
Description
This panel will discuss how food producers exploit farm workers, children, consumers, and animals to keep costs low, sell more products, and earn higher profits.

Lauren Ornelas is the founder/director of Food Empowerment Project (F.E.P.), a vegan food justice nonprofit seeking to create a more just world by helping consumers recognize the power of their food choices. F.E.P. works in solidarity with farm workers, advocates for chocolate not sourced from the worst forms of child labor, and focuses on access to healthy foods in communities of color and low-income communities. While Lauren was the director of Viva!USA, she investigated factory farms and ran consumer campaigns. In cooperation with activists across the country, she persuaded Trader Joe’s to stop selling all duck meat and was the spark that got the founder of Whole Foods Market to become a vegan. She also helped halt the construction of an industrial dairy operation in California. She served as campaign director with the Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition for six years. Watch her TEDx talk on The Power of Our Food Choices. Learn more about F.E.P.’s work at www.foodispower.org and www.veganmexicanfood.com.

Dave Simon works as general counsel for a healthcare company and is the author of the book *Meatonomics* (Conari Press, 2013). Among other things, Meatonomics looks at the effects on consumers of ag-gag laws and other aggressive legal protections that animal food producers have put in place over the past several decades. Dave serves on the boards of Animal Protection & Rescue League and APRL Fund and on the advisory council of Animal Legal Defense Fund. He has brought numerous legal challenges to free speech rules that stifle animal advocacy, resulting in better access rights for people seeking to engage in expressive activity at more than 20 venues in Southern California (including Hollywood Park, Downtown Disney, Anaheim Honda Center, and others). Dave received his B.A. from U.C. Berkeley and his J.D. from the University of Southern California. He is also the author of New Millennium Law Dictionary, a full-length legal dictionary.